

Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SNM-02 AID-05 DEAE-00 SCCT-01 SAM-01 OMB-01

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R 110615Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 974

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

CINCPAC HI

DEA BANGKOK UNN

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK UNN

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU UNN

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI UNN

AMCONSUL MANDALAY UNN

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI UNN

USLO PEKING UNN

AMCONSUL UDORN UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 0473

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PFOR BM

SUBJ: JOINT WEEKA #6

1. ARMY OFFICER ELECTED TO PYITHU HLUTTAW (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

COLONEL MAUNG MAUNG, COLONEL, ARMY STAFF (A TITLE) GENERALLY REGARDED BY MOST U.S. OFFICIALS AS AN ENERGETIC, INTELLIGENT INDIVIDUAL WHO IS CONSIDERED A FORCE IN THE BURMA DEFENSE SERVICES WAS RECENTLY ELECTED TO THE GUB PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY. WHEN QUERIED BY DATT ON HIS NEWLY FOUND PROMINENCE, HE DID NOT APPEAR TO BE OVERLY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF SITTING IN THE HLUTTAW. (COMMENT: AN APOLITICAL PERSON, POSSIBLY HE ACCEPTED THE HLUTTAW

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SELECTION TO SATISFY GENERAL TIN OO AND HELP ADD POWER TO TIN OO

BASE).

2. NARCOTICS: POPPY PLANT DESTRUCTION PROGRAM (UNCLASSIFIED)

U KO KO, MINISTER FOR HOME AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, ACCOMPANIED BY U SHWE THAN, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF POLICE; COL. AUNG HTAY, CHIEF, MIS, AND OTHERS, HAS BEEN VISITING SHAN STATE AGAIN TO EXPLAIN TO VILLAGERS "OPERATION MAILON", WHICH IS THE CONTINUING OPERATION TO DESTROY ILLICIT POPPY PLANTATIONS. THE MINISTER AND PARTY HAVE BEEN TRAVELING THE TAUNGGYI AREA - BY HELICOPTER - LECTURING ON THE EVILS OF OPIUM AND ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN UP-ROOTING POPPY PLANTS. FIELDS IN FOUR SEPARATE VILLAGE TRACTS WERE SUBJECT TO DESTRUCTION OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS.

3. NARCOTICS: SEIZURES AND ARRESTS (UNCLASSIFIED)

APPROXIMATELY 30,000 KYAT WORTH OF NARCOTICS WERE SEIZED DURING THE PAST WEEK IN FOUR SEPARATE ACTIONS, INCLUDING ONE SEIZURE OF 26 KILOGRAMS OF RAW OPIUM. TEN ARRESTS WERE MADE FOR POSSESSION OF ILLEGAL DRUGS.

4. TROUBLE WITH A CAPITAL "D" (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

THE CURRENT CAMPAIGN AGAINST "DEGENERATE WESTERN INFLUENCES" HIT A NEW LOW ON FEBRUARY 5TH WITH A MARVELOUSLY LAME DEFENSE OF THE RECENT BAN ON WESTERN DANCING. A WPD EDITORIAL EXPLAINED HALTINGLY THAT IF PEOPLE WERE ALLOWED TO DANCE, OTHER SINS WOULD SURELY FOLLOW, "LIKE PATTING (SIC) AND NECKING, AND ... POT PARTIES, AND FINALLY THE ABANDONMENT OF ALL HEALTHY ACTIVITIES." THIS PROMPTED APOCALYPTIC VISIONS OF DANCE-CRAZIED BURMESE YOUTH HUDDLED IN CORNERS SMOKING DOPE AND PATTING EACH OTHER INCESSANTLY. THE LONGER IT GOES, THE FUNNIER IT GETS.

5. WHO IS BURMESE? (CONFIDENTIAL)

THE CENTRAL COURT OF JUSTICE JANUARY 30 RULED THAT A BURMESE CITIZEN WHOSE GREAT GRANDFATHER WAS A FOREIGN NATIONAL, SPECIFICALLY AND INDIAN, IS NOT A MYANMA, THAT IS, ETHNIC BURMESE. WHILE THE COURT'S DECISION REVOLVED AROUND AN APPOINTMENT TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF SHWEDAGON PAGODA, THE RULING SEEMS TO BE AGAINST THE

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SPIRIT, IF NOT THE LETTER, OF THE CONSTITUTION. HOWEVER, ISSUE MAY NOT YET BE RESOLVED, AS APPEAL TO CENTRAL COURT OF PEOPLE'S JUSTICES IS STILL POSSIBLE.

6. ANNUAL GEM EMPORIUM (UNCLASSIFIED)

THE ANNUAL GUB GEM EMPORIUM WILL COMMENCE FEBRUARY 11. THE MAIN SHOWING WILL APPARENTLY BE NEXT WEEK, BEGINNING THE 16TH. HOTEL

SPACE IN RANGOON, AS A RESULT, IS AT A PREMIUM.

7. "BURMESE" TIN (CONFIDENTIAL)

PRESS PROMINANTLY FEATURED FEBRUARY 7 AND 8 ARTICLES EXPOSING THAI MARKETING OF TIN AS "BURMESE" TO GET AROUND INTERNATIONAL TIN COUNCIL (ITC) QUOTAS. (BURMA IS NOT AN ITC MEMBER). ARTICLES TOOK AS STARTING POINT SHORT NOTE ON "BURMESE" TIN BOOM" IN JANUARY 30 FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW. WHILE ARTICLES EMPHASIZED THAT MUCH OF THIS TIN IS MINED IN THAILAND, SMUGGLING OF BURMESE TIN INTO THAILAND WAS IMPLICITLY ADMITTED AND DEPLORED. UNUSUAL AMOUNT OF ATTENTION DEVOTED TO THIS ISSUE PROBABLY REFLECTS GUB PIQUE AT ATTEMPT BY THAI TO SHIFT BLAME FOR UNDERCUTTING THE TIN COUNCIL TO GUB.

8. OIL DEVELOPMENTS (CONFIDENTIAL)

ESSO HAS REACHED 11,301 FEET ON ITS CURRENT WELL IN BLOCK M-1, AND EXPECTS TO CLOSE OUT THE WELL AT ABOUT 11,500 FEET. MINOR AMOUNTS OF LIGHT HYDROCARBONS (C1 AND C2) WERE DISCOVERED. MARTABAN-CITIES SERVICE HAS BEGUN WORK ON ITS FIRST WELL OFF THE ARAKAN COAST IN BLOCK A-6, AND HAS REACHED A DEPTH OF ABOUT 1,400 FEET. THE JAPANESE AODC HAS PASSED THE 6,000 FOOT MARK IN ITS PRESENT WELL IN BLOCK A-3; IT HAS HAD LITTLE DIFFICULTY WITH DRILLING, WHICH IS UNUSUAL FOR THE ARAKAN COAST. TOTAL IS ALSO AT WORK ON ITS NEW WELL, AND HAS REACHED 1,750 FEET.

9. TWO TERRORISTS SENTENCED TO DEATH (CONFIDENTIAL)

TWO TERRORISTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PATRIOTIC LIBERATION ARMY (PRO-U NU) WERE SENTENCED TO DEATH FOR THE USUAL GRENADE THROWING ACTS OF TERRORISM. TERRORISTS CONCURRENTLY SENTENCED TO FIVE YEARS' RIGOROUS IMPRISONMENT ON ANOTHER CHARGE, THE SENTENCES
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PRESUMABLY TO BE SERVED IN NEXT WORLD (IT IS ONLY FAIR TO NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT EXECUTIONS ARE RARE IN BUDDHIST BURMA).
OSBORN

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